# WE SEE WHAT A WORLD BASED ON EVIL LOOKS LIKE; WHAT WOULD A WORLD BASED ON GOOD LOOK LIKE?

AN ESSAY BY

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# WE SEE WHAT A WORLD BASED ON EVIL LOOKS LIKE; WHAT WOULD A WORLD BASED ON GOOD LOOK LIKE?

I write this from a Catholic perspective but my hope and intent is to look at the issues from a humanitarian perspective, a non-denominational perspective, based on universal principles of good for all peoples, all over the world, at all times. In religious terms, that would be the battle between God and Satan, but in these terms, it's the battle between good and evil which applies to everyone regardless of religious perspective.

If we want to make the world a better place, we need to understand the fundamental basis for good and evil in two principles – free will and the power of the extreme choices of good and evil. By its very nature and definition, free will requires the ability for us to choose extreme evil, or lesser evil or good. And the spiritual nature of our own being powerfully attracts us to both good and evil by disguising evil as good and desirable. We need to be able to see, identify and call out evil if we are to overcome it.

Whether you believe in God and Satan and the reality of a spiritual dimension that we humans live in or not, the reality of good and evil is universal and affects all human beings. And **the fundamental basis for good or evil is (God-given) free will.**

In my book, *Life AFTER Death – Choices and Consequences*, I wrote:

> *God created all mankind with almost unlimited free will to make the choices to obey or disobey moral rules or otherwise think, talk and act. That's a key piece of this whole picture. Without free will, we'd still be animals living in caves. God gave us free will in order for us to fully enjoy his creation including life after death, if we choose it.* ***But it's a two-sided coin because it also allows us to choose evil. It may be our greatest gift but also our most dangerous curse. Good vs. evil; virtue vs. vice; love vs. hate.***

I think it's easiest to see in the comparison of the seven heavenly virtues to the seven cardinal sins: humility, charity, chastity, gratitude, temperance, patience, and diligence as compared to pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth. All of them may seem good and desirable in one way or another and every person has the free will to choose which ones are most attractive. It seems to me that the cardinal sins prioritize self-gratification, a very powerful desire that appears to be good in itself, perhaps better described as pure selfishness.

I've written in other essays about free will, evil and the consequences of our choices on this same link.

## WE SEE WHAT A WORLD BASED ON EVIL LOOKS LIKE

Evil on a world-wide scale is a choice expressed by those in power for their own purposes – greed, lust, political power, national supremacy, etc., and it comes at the expense of suffering by those under their power and upsets the good of the world order for others. That evil is expressed individually, collectively, by governments and organizations around the world.

> *"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority; still more when you superadd the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority."* is a famous quote by Lord Acton, highlighting the moral dangers of unchecked authority. (https://www.acton.org/research/lord-acton-quote-archive)

While history provides many examples of good works, it provides overwhelming examples of evil by a few powerful men:

> *Evil power in history often emerges when authority is concentrated, unchecked, and used to oppress, destroy, or exploit others — leading to mass suffering, systemic collapse, and lasting harm.*
>
> *Notable Historical Cases*
> *1. Adolf Hitler – Nazi Germany*
> *2. Joseph Stalin – Soviet Union (1924–1953)*
> *3. Mao Zedong – People's Republic of China (1949–1976)*
> *4. Pol Pot – Khmer Rouge, Cambodia (1975–1979)*
> *5. King Leopold II – Belgian Congo (late 19th century)*
> *6. Saddam Hussein – Iraq (1979–2003)*
> *7. Rwandan Genocide (1994)*
>
> *Common Patterns*
> *Across these examples, evil power often involved:*
> - *Concentration of authority without checks or balances*
> - *Dehumanization of opponents to justify atrocities*
> - *Use of fear and propaganda to maintain control*
> - *Systemic oppression leading to mass death or societal collapse*
>
> *These cases show that power itself is not inherently evil, but unchecked and misused power can become a force for destruction. Historical lessons emphasize the need for accountability, transparency, and institutional safeguards to prevent such abuses.*
> Microsoft Copilot Search, https://www.bing.com/search?q=historical%20examples%20of%20evil%20power%20in%20history&qs=n&form=QBRE&sp=-1&lq=0&pq=historical%20examples%20of%20evil%20power%20in%20history&sc=0-44&sk=&cvid=115FAFDA5D7240F694BFA3C304C5FFD1

What surprises me in the above quote is that extraordinary wealth is not on the list. Think of all those in very powerful positions and you always see them in palaces,

mansions, large luxurious yachts, expensive airplanes, etc. And they are surrounded by people of wealth and those who want more wealth at any cost. Self-enrichment is their common goal.

The other extraordinary thing about that list is that it shows the absolute inhumanity of very powerful people, their willingness and obsession to literally exterminate millions of human beings for their own self-gratification. Many other evil men have used their power to directly harm innocent people or deny them basic human needs and rights, all around the world, including modern day dictators and our current president.

But not just in the past. Every single day on the news, we see many causes of human suffering other than war that are the results of powerful people in government such as: violence and oppression; humanitarian crises; immigration policies and unjust incarceration; industries consuming resources needed for humanitarian purposes; environmental degradation; climate change; etc. All that suffering is caused by or under the control of powerful leaders and their allies.

Too many peoples around our world are suffering right now under the power of evil men and their supporting national governments: the war in Ukraine; the war in the Iran; wars in Gaza and Lebanon, Asia and Africa; and threatened wars by North Korea and China. Some may justify these wars for supposedly good reasons, but they all inflict grave harm to millions of innocent human beings who do not deserve such outrageous suffering. You can look at the grim details of each conflict and see the evil cause and purpose, on one side or the other, or on both sides.

And it is my opinion based on the reality of our current situation, that our current administration, in both the executive and legislative branches, is working for evil purposes in much of their agenda: lies, fabrications, corruption, illegal programs, cancelling humanitarian causes, political revenge, etc., all well documented in the daily news and recorded for posterity. It is certainly the most self-dealing government in the history of our country and the cause of much suffering by many people, both in the US and around the world.

I could go on and on, and there are many other resources that describe the harm and suffering that is the result of a relatively few, very powerful men working for their own evil purposes.

**WHAT WOULD A WORLD BASED ON GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

Fundamental to the universal good of all people are (God-given) ***Natural Moral Laws,*** as I wrote in *Life AFTER Death – Choices and Consequences:*

> *Once we start to address human behavior, we need to have a basis for moral values, distinguishing between good and bad thoughts, words, and actions. Some of that*

*natural moral guidance is part of our God-given nature and some of it is given by our historical social culture.*

*"Natural law is a theory in ethics and philosophy that says that human beings possess intrinsic values that govern our reasoning and behavior.* ***Natural law maintains that these rules of right and wrong are inherent in people and are not created by society or court judges****."* (Wikipedia, my emphasis)

*Natural laws are:*

- ***Based upon Principles and Truth (Inherent to Creation)***
- ***Harmonized with, due to Knowledge and Understanding***
- ***Universal; exists and applies anywhere in the Universe regardless of location***
- ***Eternal and Immutable; exists and applies for as long as the Universe exists, and cannot be changed***

https://www.abdabrs.com/natural-law.html

Again, from *Life AFTER Death – Choices and Consequences*:

*A common term for natural moral laws is* ***virtue****: A virtue is a trait or quality that is deemed to be morally good and thus is valued as a foundation of principle and good moral being. In other words, it is a behavior that shows high moral standards: doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong. The opposite of virtue is vice*. (Wikipedia)

*The* ***Seven Heavenly Virtues*** *are: temperance, justice, prudence, fortitude, faith, hope, and charity/love. Additional examples of virtues are compassion, respect, generosity, and gratitude/thankfulness. See Virtuesforlife.com for a list and description of 73 virtues.*

*In today's (2025) cultural environment, it also seems that honesty and truthfulness should be virtues we model as compared to lies and conspiracy theories (on both sides) that are so common. Honesty or truthfulness is a facet of moral character that connotes positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, straightforwardness (including straightforwardness of conduct: earnestness), along with the absence of lying, cheating, theft, etc. Honesty also involves being trustworthy, loyal, fair, and sincere. (Wikipedia)*

*Another thought is that virtues are a kind of measure of how 'good' we are. A virtuous person is a good person and vice versa. It's that simple. Look at the list of virtues to see how you can become a 'better' person.*

*Natural moral laws are embedded in our human nature by our Creator. We are almost constantly influenced by the push-pull between good and evil; we have tendencies toward both. But they are entirely under control by our free will to*

*choose one or the other, from one extreme good to another extreme evil or to anything in between.*

*Every human being that has ever lived, lives now, or will live in the future is unique and has their own version of these natural moral laws embedded in their nature with their own level of conscience toward good and evil. That makes our choices between good and evil subjective; we each see our own version of right and wrong. Generally, they are intersubjective – believed to be true by many, but each person has their own unique version.*

*God's natural moral laws guide us to love and respect all people, especially the marginalized and those in need of care and compassion. But our free will also enables us to discriminate, hate and abuse others in violation of those laws. Religious freedom allows us to do that in the name of God, supposedly. People who do so believe in an autocratic and judgmental God instead of a loving and merciful God. You're free to choose which God you believe in.*

***But the greatest of these is LOVE***

1 Cor 13*: If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.*

*Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, embraces all things.*

*Love never fails. --- So, faith, hope and love remain, these three, but the greatest of these is love.*
*Again, as above about virtues, love is about behavior toward others (and God), i.e., love is not selfish. Love is God's gift to you, and you best reflect that love when you give it to others. We are all greatly blessed by those around us – family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, community, etc., and it's our own duty to likewise be a blessing to others. The balance between what we give and what we receive will be reflected after death in each one of us at our judgment.*

A world based on good for all people would reflect the universal values described above – natural moral laws, virtuous principles, and most importantly, love for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, etc. Leaders and governments would place the needs of their people above their own personal agendas or selfishness for power, control and wealth.

In such a world, wars would be avoided and the resources used for military aggression and defense could be used for humanitarian needs. Hateful ideologies would be moderated for the mutual benefit of both sides. International laws would be respected and enforced. Resources would be reprioritized to alleviate human suffering from all causes, natural and man-made. The world would live in peace and have all basic human needs addressed.

That kind of a world probably has never occurred in the past and not likely in the future, but why can't those values be the guiding principles for all nations. It is literally the free choice of those in power to do otherwise, which means that, to the extent possible, the real leaders of the nations need to choose good over evil.

As I was editing my above thoughts, Pope Leo released a new document for the *11th World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation* on August 20, 2026. It begins with: *"They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Isaiah 2:4).* In it, Pope Leo writes a strong, clear message about the issues of our world under the powers of evil and appeals for love and peace for all peoples much better than I can. See: https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/messages/creation/documents/20260815-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html

For another point of view, refer to a recent article by Dr. Kathleen Bonnette titled *Beyond Patriarchy* published on August 6, 2026, which reflects on how a post-American Christianity must move beyond patriarchy and recover the transformative power of relationship, compassion, and shared humanity. (jimwallis+post-american-christianity-series@substack.com)

Thank you to all those who have expressed this message better than I.
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